



CITY OF FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES

Council Chambers, 715 Princess Anne Street
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401

HON. THOMAS J. TOMZAK, MAYOR
HON. MARY KATHERINE GREENLAW, VICE MAYOR
HON. KERRY P. DEVINE, AT-LARGE
HON. BRADFORD C. ELLIS, WARD ONE
HON. GEORGE C. SOLLEY, WARD TWO
HON. FREDERIC N. HOWE, III, WARD THREE
HON. BEATRICE R. PAOLUCCI, WARD FOUR

Council Work Session
February 14, 2012

Boards and Commission Interviews

The Council of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia held a work session on Tuesday, February 14, 2012, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room.

Council Present. Mayor Thomas J. Tomzak, Presiding. Vice-Mayor Mary Katherine Greenlaw. Councilors Kerry P. Devine, Bradford C. Ellis, Frederic N. Howe, III, Beatrice R. Paolucci and George C. Solley.

Also Present. Clerk of Council Tonya B. Lacey.

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), Building Codes Appeals Board (BCAB) and Planning Commission Applicant Interviews (attachments).

Council interviewed the following nine (7) individuals for consideration of appointment to the BZA, BCBA and the Planning Commission. Each applicant was asked to respond to basically the same questions for the Board in which they were interviewing for.

- **Helen Ross (Planning Commission)** – Shared that she is currently serving her third term as the Chair of the BZA. She feels that she is a good person to work with. She also stated that she would like to retain both the BZA and Planning Commission seats. She said that she would bring knowledge of the ordinances to the Planning Commission which are responsible for the BZA decisions and she felt that knowledge would help if called upon. She because there is already a vacancy on the BZA she would like to remain on the Board so that Council will not have two vacancies to fill. When asked what her specific approach to land use matters she said he did not have any in depth knowledge in land use, but she understood that Planning Commission would be looking at many special use permits and land

use issues. She also stated that because of her work with the Virginia Department of Transportation she may not be able to get involved in some of the cases. She added that this would be an opportunity to learn and for her to give some of her knowledge. She said she hopes to be involved and help craft the plan and assisting facilitating Economic Development. She said she would give an unbiased perspective on project that come before the board. When asked how she would pursue economic development, but protect historic preservation she said, public hearings are a good way to start by getting the public's opinions on what's important to them. After hearing the public's opinion, she said they must enforce the ordinance, although there can be a fine line. She said she feels the City does a great job of blending economic development and historic preservation. She made it clear that her primary employer was her primary contract and stated that due to being on call during inclement weather there was a possibility of her missing a meeting.

- **Michael Craig (Planning Commission)** - said he has lived in the City for seven years he grew up in Spotsylvania County. He would like to serve because he has expertise in planning, he has a Master's in planning and Fredericksburg has many elements and its appealing to him and he is excited about getting involved. He said serving on the commission would allow him to see how the government and the private sector interact. He said as a planner he spends a lot of time presenting to the Planning Commissions for the private developers. He has a lot of respect for those serving on the board. He said he hoped to gain patience from being a role player on the other side. He said Fredericksburg is cutting edge and his approach to urban planning would be the great tools the City has. He said Jumpstart is fabulous that goes beyond the planning commission into economic development. He is a big believer of comprehensive planning. An example he gave was the Eagle Village project and the connector between the hospital and Eagle Village was great planning. He said he would also be willing to attend the certified planning training. When asked his approach on small city issues compared to those he work on in a large County he said he has worked with some interesting zoning codes from Spotsylvania County to the City of Richmond where he worked on his Master's on a project in Shockoe Bottom. He said it's discouraging to go to meetings and you

are the only person there. He said in the City it's the total opposite citizens are involved and that's exciting to him and he like to interact with people like that. He said the City is very historic and he has a big value for historic preservation.

- **James Jarrell (Planning Commission or BZA)** – stated that he grew up in Fredericksburg and graduated from James Monroe went to the University of Richmond and lived and worked there for a few years then went back to Richmond for his law degree. He moved back to the area to practice law until 2002 then he went into real estate development. He said he thinks it's time for him to get involved. When asked his approach to land use development he said the developer side of him will follow the rules not matter what they are, everyone should be able to follow the rules. He said the zoning process can be frustrating sometimes but being a lawyer he could see both sides (developer and neighbor). He said if it came down to it he would lean towards property rights. He said he is not real familiar with the comprehensive plan but he has looked at it a few time and would need to study it. He said he would be happy to serve on either board. He said his strongest area would be the Planning Commission because he deals with development on a daily basis. He also agreed to serve on the Building Code Appeals Board if that's where Council wanted him. He also agreed to attend the Planning Certification training if he was appointed to the Planning Commission.
- **Robert Narvaez (Board of Zoning Appeals)** – he said his experience is in the planning field through education and employment he has had to deal with contentious issues from the Planner's side where he has had to look at things comprehensively. He said with the BZA he would get the opportunity to apply his knowledge. He feels his position has given him the experience to fill this vacancy. Being that Mr. Narvaez was a planner, when asked if he would have conflicts with an applicant requesting a variance, he said he wouldn't; he would apply the rules as set forth. When asked about his time in Brazil and the differences in planning he said they build projects and deal with the consequences later. He gave an example of the mass transit system they built. He said it was built with the expectation that the development would come later. He said everyone uses the transit system. He also said they will close down streets for pedestrians only. He was asked how he would pursue urban agriculture in Fredericksburg and he said it is a way to promote

several goals in one swoop. He said there is a lot of need for open space and urban agriculture would create that. He said Fredericksburg is unique because of the historic building he said people would shutter with the thought of green roofs. He said traditional cities did have green space. He said he chose the BZA over Planning because of time commitment.

- **JoAnne Kaiman (Planning Commission)** – when she was asked what skill set she would bring to the Planning Commission she stated not having the professional background in planning, development, real estate or architecture that she would speak on behalf of the general citizen and bring the citizens perspective. She said she would like to be a part of the City's growth. She said she is familiar with the Comprehensive and the Jumpstart Plans. When asked about land use issues and how she would handle them she said she would like to be as much of a peace keeper as possible and try to be logical and work together with everyone. She would like to see more linkage to the City's assets like cleaner river water for recreational and other usage. She was asked if she would be able to attend the Planning Commission training and she said she would and that she was aware of it. She said she has lived in the City for almost four years.
- **Ralph Hicks (Planning Commission)** – said he wanted to serve because he has a fondness of the City and the people in the City. He said since he's been back he's notice a lot of empty storefronts and it reminds him of when he was on Council. He said the Planning Commission needs expertise on it that can look at new ways to pay for ventures. He said he just wanted to get involved. He said having been a planning commissioner you must have an open mind and work and encourage people to do things. He said everyone should work together to allow people to do what they want as long as it's allowed and good for the City. He said on the land use issues everyone must work together. He said he's big on historic preservation. He said he would be willing to take the required certification course. When asked whether he thought the City was going in the same direction it was years ago when he was on Planning Commission and City Council and whether he would steer the City in a different direction he said sometimes you can use old ideas but use a different approach. He gave the example of tax abatement and stated it worked

back then and it could work now. He said there is work needed in the commercial and college area where so many properties are becoming rentals.

- **Robert Hale** – said he was a contractor for 20 years, and then he moved up to a building inspector in Culpeper, then the City, and Williamsburg and he is currently in Warrenton where he also serves as the Fire Official and Maintenance Official. He said he has developed tracking programs for the fire official job. His current job requires reviewing of plans, solving problems and tracking. He said a building official should follow the letter of the code and he said he has never had an appeal in Warrenton, and Williamsburg but there was one when he worked in the City. He said you must talk to people and come to a common ground. He said he wanted to serve because in the past there was not a good mix of people who understood what the code was trying to do rather than making someone happy. He said there are compromises that can be made but still make a building safe. He said he was also approaching retirement and he would have time to devote to it. He was asked if he knew of a particular situation where the code wasn't enforced when it should have been and he said nothing in particular, but he stated that previous code officials didn't grant modifications they just signed off on them and this type of practice makes it hard for the building officials. He said he would like to serve the City and if there is another board they would rather put him on he would be willing to do that.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was declared officially adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Tonya B. Lacey

**Tonya B. Lacey
Clerk of Council
City of Fredericksburg**

APPROVED

3-27-12